

WOLVERHAMPTON SAFEGUARDING TOGETHER

7 MINUTE BRIEFING: LEAH



Background

Leah's parents were separated and had a long history of domestic abuse in their relationship. Following Leah's birth Mum had an episode of severe post-partum psychosis which required a period of psychiatric intensive care and on-going psychiatric follow-up following her return to the community. During Mum's admission, Leah and her three siblings were placed with their maternal grandmother before returning to Mum on a supervision order following her discharge.

What can you do to prevent reoccurrence?

- Give as much priority to attending CIN (Family Help) meetings as to core groups for children on Child Protection plans, provide up to date reports and check minutes to update yourself & for accuracy.
- Multi-agency discussions in acute situations should involve all relevant professionals even if there is nothing suspicious at the time.

What can you do to prevent reoccurrence?

- If you become aware of information which may indicate there is a risk to someone you are not directly involved with you should share it with relevant professionals and safeguarding agencies.
- There should be continuous evaluation of a family's circumstances and the risk any change poses to their well-being.

Key Learning

3. Child in Need (soon to be Family Help) meetings should involve all frontline professionals involved with the family and not rely on reporting from parents.
4. When significant injuries occur in infants, decisions should only be made when there is full understanding of all circumstances by all agencies.

Background

At 11 months of age, Leah was admitted to a children's ward with a fractured leg that was believed to have an innocent explanation. Two months later, the family were made homeless and were placed in a hotel outside Wolverhampton. They remained open to Children's Social Care on a Child in Need plan.

What happened

When Leah was 15 months old, she was taken to an Emergency Department with a fatal, apparently inflicted head injury. Post-mortem examination identified further significant injuries which had been sustained over a period of time. A criminal investigation is under way.

Key Learning

1. Professionals involved were not thinking family.
2. Professionals need to be mindful that earlier court assessments and reports may not reflect current situations and should not be relied on as reassurance about current parenting capability and the safety of children.

